

Communicable Disease Unit
Prevention Program
Expedited Partner Therapy (EPT)
Guidance

Additional information and copies may be obtained from:

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**This guidance will replace all previous guidance documents from December 2007.*

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Introduction

The Wyoming Department of Health (WDH) Communicable Disease Unit (CDU) participates in Expedited Partner Therapy (EPT).

- Expedited Partner Therapy (EPT): the practice of treating the sex partners of persons with sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) without an intervening personal assessment by a health care provider
- Patient-delivered Partner Therapy (PDPT): the practice of clinicians providing their patients with drugs intended for the partners, prescribe extra doses of medication in the index patients' name, or write prescriptions in the partners' names

The gold standard for interrupting the chain of transmission of STDs is to examine, perform diagnostic testing and appropriately treat all partners of persons diagnosed with a sexually transmitted disease. Patient Delivered Partner Therapy (PDPT) has been shown to be efficacious in accomplishing the last part of the standard for treatment of sex partners. Using this method, the health care provider and patient assess how likely it is that the sex partner of patient diagnosed with chlamydia or gonorrhea will visit a health care provider for evaluation and/or treatment. If the partners are deemed unlikely to access health care themselves, either a prescription for antibiotics or regimen of the appropriate antibiotic(s) along with allergy and educational information about the medication(s), is given to the patient to give their sex partner(s).

Expedited Partner Therapy Recommendations

Providers are responsible to make reasonable attempts to assure treatment of identified sex partners of their STD-infected patients. Specific recommendations for incorporating PDPT into the control of chlamydial and gonorrhea infections within clinical settings include:

- If a patient diagnosed with gonorrhea or chlamydia is accompanied by sex partner(s) at the time of their clinic visit for treatment of the STD, the health care provider should ensure that these partner(s) are evaluated, tested, and treated during that visit.
- If the partner (or partners) are not present at time of the infected patient's clinic visit, the provider should inform the patient that it would be best to have all partners that were exposed during the previous sixty (60) days come into the clinic for examination, testing, and treatment. However, if treatment is not otherwise assured, the patient should be provided antibiotics for their partner(s). These medications must include appropriate written information for the treated third party. The provider should document all PDPT actions (e.g., written information, type of prescription or actual medication, and number of prescriptions) in the patient's medical record.
- PDPT may consist of either a prescription for antibiotics or provision of regimen(s) of the appropriate antibiotic(s), along with relevant allergy and education information for the patient to give to his/her partners. The information provided to partners should specify that determination of infection requires testing for disease *before* taking the treatment.

Expedited Partner Therapy Protocols and Procedures

This is an optional means of sexually transmitted infection case management to be used at the discretion of the health care provider(s) managing cases of gonorrhea and/or chlamydia infections. Ideally, all sex partners of infected patients would be promptly evaluated, tested and treated by a health care provider in a clinical setting with the goal of reducing the rates of re-infections and complications. This is currently being accomplished cooperatively between Family Planning, STD clinic staff, and Disease Intervention Specialists (DIS). With both national and state STD rates on the increase and the limited availability of providers, a tool needs to be available to treat partners who are unable to seek screening. Expedited Partner Therapy (EPT) addresses the importance of promptly reaching and treating difficult partners thus reducing re-infections and slowing the rate of disease spread in communities.

The Wyoming Department of Health recognizes the expertise that is available throughout the state of Wyoming and is providing EPT as a tool to providers to use with clients. Below are listed protocols and procedures for determining if a patient is an EPT candidate, reporting STD patients and partners, dispensing EPT medications, and other EPT related legal and DIS referral services.

Determine Patient Eligibility:

1. All patients who may be a candidate for distribution of EPT medications must have a diagnosed STD either confirmed by:
 - a. Gram stain (gonorrhea)
 - b. Culture or nucleic acid amplification test confirmed gonorrhea or chlamydial infection.

Reporting STD Case (Patient and Partners):

1. Inform all patients (index cases) that if possible all partners need to be evaluated at the clinic. The partner pack is only given because partner referral does not happen. Providers need to explain to patients the importance of screening and the possible side effects of medications.
2. Use the STD Case Report form to document the decision regarding how to treat partner(s). All partners name and locating information needs to be documented on interview record and subsequent field records.
3. Documentation in patients chart is also required and will be examined during annual audit for quality assurance of practice

Dispensing Expedited Partner Therapy:

1. Dispensing
 - a. All PDPT should be dispensed in pre-packaged partner packs provided to clinics by the Wyoming Department of Health.
 - i. Separate packs for gonorrhea and chlamydial infection

1. Azithromycin for chlamydia
 2. Suprax (cefixime) and Azithromycin for gonorrhea
 3. Contains info about partner responsibilities, partner referrals, provider lists medications instructions (allergy warning), STD information and condoms.
 4. Do not open the package, it is to be opened by the partner.
- b. Document in the index case chart “medications provided for partner”
 - c. Do not put the partner’s name in the index case’s chart (partner names are required to be documented on the STD field records and Patient Interview forms)
 - d. Complete the EPT prescription form in the logbook in the pharmacy. Dispensing logs will be provided to clinics by the CDU.
 - e. There must be a partner name to write on the prescription form.
 - f. Dispense the EPT to index case to give to partner.

Partner Referral Recommendations:

1. Men who have Sex with Men, 5% of partners evaluated as contacts to STDs are newly diagnosed with HIV when evaluated. Therefore these clients are to be referred to DIS and not given PDPT.
2. Who to refer to DIS for additional counseling and assistance with partner contact/treatment;
 - a. Criteria for referral;
 - i. >2 sex partners in preceding 2 months
 - ii. Patient wants assistance or state they are unable or unwilling to contact partner
 - iii. Men who have sex with men
 - b. You should still offer PDPT to heterosexuals with gonorrhea or chlamydial infection. However, because patients with the above criteria are most likely to need public health partner notification assistance, they should be referred to Communicable Disease Prevention Program DIS.
 - c. Inform persons with the above risk criteria to expect contact from the WDH DIS.

Expedited Partner Therapy Ordering Process

The WDH CDU keeps partner packs in stock at the CDU. Partner packs can be ordered directly from the CDU and shipped directly to the providing facility. Partner packs can be ordered using the EPT Order form located on the CDU website. All requested orders must be sent to cdusupplies@wyo.gov or 307-777-5279 for processing. All EPT order forms will be tracked by the CDU.

All EPT partner packs will need to be kept separate from 340B medications if your facility participates in the 340B program. These medications needs to be labeled “Partner Packs.” 340B medications cannot be used for EPT.

Expedited Partner Therapy Reporting Process

All partner packs given to patients for their partner(s) use, are to be reported to the CDU. The EPT Report Form will be completed and sent to the CDU by the 7th day of every month for the previous months reporting. For example, October reporting will need to be reported to the CDU by November 7.

Please submit the EPT Reporting Log to cdusupplies@wyo.gov or 307-777-5279 (fax). Non-compliance with reporting requirements may result in delays of medication orders.

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